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Annual Report

OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year ended December 31st, 1956.



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113, East Street,

South Molton,

May, 1957.

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and
Councillors of the Borough of South Molton.

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual
Report on the Health and Sanitation Administration
of the Borough for the year 1956.

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health

South Molton Borough

LIST OF STAFF

The Staff of the Public Health Department
consists of:

Part-time Officers :—

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health.

A. J. C. NEX, M.S.I.A.,

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Mrs. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

Whole-time Officer :—

H. SETTLE, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	5,910
Population (Registrar-General's Mid-Year Estimate) ...	3,100
Inhabited Houses	1,011
Rateable Value	£41,099
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£150

VITAL STATISTICS.

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	19	15	34
Illegitimate	1	0	1
			35

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 population 11.29

	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	1	0	1
Illegitimate	0	0	0
			1

STILL BIRTH RATE per 1,000 total (live & still) births 27.77

	Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	21	27	48

DEATH RATE per 1,000 population 15.48

The Table below shows the comparative figures for the South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The Local Birth and Death Rates are shown corrected by the Area Comparability Factors.

	Birth Rate per 1,000 population		Death Rate per 1,000 population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
S, Molton Borough ...	12.41	0.32	12.53	28.56	0
England and Wales ...	15.7	—	11.7	23.8	0

DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR.

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	1	0	1
Illegitimate	...	...	0	0	0
					1

DEATH RATE per 1,000 Live Births 28.56

DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 4 WEEKS.

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	1	0	1
Illegitimate	...	...	0	0	0
					1

LOCAL DEATHS OVER 65 YEARS.

65—69	...	8	85—89	6
70—74	...	1	90—94	4
75—79	...	10	95 plus	1
80—84	...	10	Total	40

DEATHS FROM PUEPERAL CAUSES.

Puerperal Sepsis...	...	...	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	0

CAUSES OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1956.

			Males	Females
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	...	...	0	0
Tuberculosis (Other)	...	...	1	0
Syphilitic Disease	...	...	0	0
Diphtheria	...	...	0	0
Whooping Cough	...	...	0	0
Meningococcal Infections	...	...	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	0	0
Measles	...	...	0	0
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	...	...	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm (Stomach)	...	...	1	0
Malignant Neoplasm (Lung, Bronchus)	...	...	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm (Breast)	...	...	0	0
Malignant Neoplasm (Uterus)	...	...	0	0
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	...	0	1	0
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	...	...	0	0
Diabetes	...	...	0	0
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	2	5	0

CAUSES OF DEATHS (cont.)

			Males	Females
Coronary Disease (Angina)	...	...	2	2
Hypertension with Heart Disease	...	...	0	1
Other Heart Disease	...	...	4	8
Other Circulatory Disease	...	...	1	1
Influenza	...	...	1	0
Pneumonia	...	..	0	0
Bronchitis	...	...	1	2
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	...	0	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	0	0
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	...	0	0
Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	0	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	2	0
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	...	...	0	0
Congenital Malformation	...	...	0	0
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	...	...	1	2
Motor Vehicle Accidents	...	...	0	0
All other Accidents	...	...	2	3
Suicide	...	...	2	0
Homicide and Operations of War	...	...	0	0
			21	27

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED IN 1956

(In age groups excluding Tuberculosis)

Age years	Measles		Whooping Cough	
	M	F	M	F
0—1	0	0	0	3
1—2	2	6	0	0
2—3	3	7	1	1
3—4	7	4	1	1
4—5	3	8	4	1
5—10	52	25	6	2
10—15	0	1	1	1
15—20	0	0	0	0
20—25	1	0	0	0
25—30	0	0	0	0
30—40	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	69	51	13	9

NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS DURING 1956.

Age years	NON PULMONARY	
	M	F
76	1	—

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA. HOSPITALS.

1. Tuberculosis.

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds.

2. Maternity Cases.

There is a ward of 14 beds with a fully qualified staff at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for maternity cases of doubt and difficulty.

Three beds are also set aside for maternity cases in the South Molton and District Cottage Hospital.

The General Practitioners' Maternity Unit of 13 beds is at "Highfield," Victoria Road, Barnstaple.

3. Isolation of Infectious Diseases.

Cases are sent either to Whipton Hospital, near Exeter, or to the Kingsley Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. The latter is of recent construction and well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases.

There are 20 beds available in cubicles for Infectious Cases.

4. Small Pox.

The Small Pox Hospital, to which cases of Small Pox will be sent, is at Upton Pine. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter 67158, and this is the same number for the ambulance.

5. General.

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough of South Molton, serves this area. There are 9 beds for general and maternity cases. The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple, also serves the area and provides Specialists' Services.

In South Molton there are also chronic sick patients at Beech House, but no further admissions are being made.

6. Clinics and Treatment Centres.

CHEST CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple. Below is a table giving days and times of attendance.

Tuesday	9 a.m.	-	1 p.m.	}	Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
	2 p.m.	-	4 p.m.		
Thursday	9 a.m.	-	1 p.m.	}	A.P. Refills.
	2 p.m.	-	4 p.m.		
Friday	9 a.m.	-	1 p.m.	}	A.P. Refills.
	2 p.m.	-	4 p.m.		

V.D. CLINICS.—These are held at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, in the Annexe. Times and days are as below for the sessions.

FEMALES—Monday 4 p.m. Thursday 4.30 p.m.
MALES—Monday 5.15 p.m. Thursday 5.45 p.m.

7. Professional Nursing in the Homes.

There is one District Nurse in the area who also acts as a Midwife.

8. Laboratory Facilities.

The main Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of water and milk are also carried out. The service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the medical practitioners.

There is also a Pathological Laboratory at 75, Boutport Street, Barnstaple, with a full-time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon area. There is a Blood Bank at this Laboratory.

9. Immunization Against Diphtheria.

During the year 49 children received Primary Injections and 29 received Reinforcing Injections.

10. Vaccination.

The following table shows the number of Vaccinations carried out in their age groups during the year :—

Under 1 year—15;	1-4 years—14;	5-14 years—1.
15 years and over—9.		

11. Ambulance Services.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e. the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the

Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme an ambulance station has been established at South Molton. The districts served are South Molton Borough and South Molton Rural District. The Hospital Car Service, also under the Devon County Council, is available on application to the Hospital, by the doctor concerned, and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when an ambulance is not necessary.

12. Acute Poliomyelitis.

No cases occurred during the year.

13. Food Poisoning.

No cases occurred during the year.

14. Home Help Services.

There are Home Helps operating in the South Molton Borough and Rural District and the scheme is run by the Devon County Council. During the year help was rendered in 22 cases as follows:-

Maternity 12; Old Age 3; Old Age (long term) 3;
Others (Sickness etc.) 4.

Any case recommended by a Doctor, Health Visitor or District Nurse will be considered for a Home Help. The Home Helps do any work in the house normally done by the housewife.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk and the Public Health Inspector for the help they have given me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor and from the Holywell Spring and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,500,000 gallons. The dam has been strengthened and a new spillway constructed.

It is piped therefrom to the Filter House at Westland Bridge and passed through three Candy Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6in. diameter to the Service Reservoirs in North Road, South Molton. The Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons, the water is then distributed through the Town mains which are of varying diameters. The water is sampled and analysed at regular intervals.

The filters and the water supply system generally continue to be maintained in a highly efficient manner by your Waterworks Foreman. Chlorination of the water is being carried out by the drip feed method at the Service Reservoirs and is proving to be satisfactory. A full supply of water has been maintained throughout the year.

RESULTS OF SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS.

A total of 4 samples of water have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and these were all placed in Grade 1. These results can be regarded as satisfactory.

The reports disclose no evidence that the water contains any unusual constituent or that it possesses any unwholesome quality but that the water is PLUMBO SOLVENT.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL

MOLE BRIDGE SEWAGE WORKS.—The works are being satisfactorily maintained. Samples of the effluent are taken at frequent intervals by the Devon Rivers Board and the Analyst's reports are satisfactory.

The sewage outfalls at Cooks Cross and West End Terrace are being maintained as well as it is possible to do having regard to the conditions of the plant.

The Council continue to press the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for permission to proceed with the second stage of the Sewage Disposal Scheme.

HOUSING.

No Council Houses were erected. 4 Private Bungalows and Houses have been completed and 3 additional Dwellings were provided by conversions.

Application for Improvement Grants under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1949 in respect of 11 Dwellings were approved.

128 Traditional Houses and Bungalows, and 16 Non-Traditional Houses have been erected by the Council since World War II, and 55 by private enterprise.

PLANS.

24 Plans for new buildings, improvements and extensions have been dealt with under Planning and Byelaws during the year.

SANITATION.

Number of Houses inspected	...	...	13
Number of preliminary notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	7
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	1

CHIEF DEFECTS THAT HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH ARE:

Roof Repairs.

Lavatory Pans renewed.

Choked Drains.

Stoves and Cooking Appliances renewed.

General repairs to Walls, Floors and Ceilings.

Improvement of Domestic Water Supplies. A considerable number of New Services have been laid.

Few Public Health nuisances have occurred in the Borough during the year and those which have occurred have been dealt with informally and remedied.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

Domestic Refuse is collected twice weekly in the built-up area of the Borough, and monthly collections are made from outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the tip at Hacche Road and the tip is regularly treated for the destruction of rodents.

BAKEHOUSES.

Bakehouses were inspected periodically and found to be satisfactory.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and generally are found to be kept as required by the Factory Acts. Owners have from time to time been asked to make minor improvements and have readily done so.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough:—

Number on Register	...	...	...	12
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	8
Notices served	...	...	...	Nil

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the Borough:—

Number on register	...	...	...	35
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	12
Notices served	...	...	...	Nil
Cases in which defects were found and remedied				2

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

There are two Private Slaughterhouses in the Borough and both are kept in good condition.

MEAT INSPECTION.

All meat from slaughterhouses in the Borough is inspected, chiefly by Mr. Nex and on few occasions by myself when he is not available. A total of 209 visits were made, resulting in inspections and condemnations as shown on the table following.

Unsound food including meat is surrendered by Traders and a Certificate is given. The unsound food is marked with a green dye and is given to persons to boil for poultry and pig food. Meat found to be unsound is burned.

FOOD CONDEMNED.

The following foods have been condemned:—

Tinned Foods		No. of Tins		Weight
Meat	...	12	...	27 lbs.
Milk	...	5	...	5 "
Fruit	...	30	...	30 "
Vegetables	...	12	...	12 "
Coffee	...	1	...	1 "
Other Meat	—		...	26 lbs. 8 ozs.

From Slaughterhouses:—

Meat, 180 lbs.

Offal, 102 lbs.

**CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED
IN WHOLE OR IN PART.**

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	109	—	—	160	376	Nil
Number inspected	109	—	—	160	376	Nil
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci.						
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	3	—	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	14	—	—	2	—	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tubercu- losis and cysticerci	12.83 %	—	—	3.12 %	Nil	Nil
Tuberculosis only.						
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	13	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	.91 %	—	—	—	.37 %	Nil
Cysticercosis.						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

INSPECTION OF FOOD PREMISES.

A number of visits were made to Food Premises in the Borough, and conditions generally were found to be good. All premises requiring registration receive regular visits and all are maintained in good condition.

ICE CREAM.

Ice Cream is mainly of the pre-packed variety, only one shop manufactures.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PEST ACT.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken:—

The premises are carefully examined for rat runs, and clean meal pre-baits are laid down, which are left for a day or two, when poisoned baits are used, and the results are very satisfactory. The Refuse Tip at Hacche Road, the Sewage Outfalls at Mole Bridge, West End Terrace and Cooks Cross are periodically treated.

A few complaints have been received of infestation on private premises and these have been dealt with.

HAROLD SETTLE,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

